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Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Programme 14. Economic and social development in Africa

1. The preparation, format and content of the medium-term plan and its revisions are governed by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

2. Regulation 3.11 provides, *inter alia*, that the medium-term plan shall be revised as necessary every two years to incorporate required programme changes and that the proposed revisions shall be as detailed as required to incorporate the programme implications of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the intergovernmental organs or international conferences since the adoption of the plan.

3. The revisions proposed below modify programme 14, Economic and social development in Africa, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/219 of 18 December 1996 and issued in document A/51/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

4. The revisions include the creation of two additional subprogrammes, one on promoting the advancement of women and the other on strengthening subregional activities for development, in response to new mandates adopted by legislative bodies. In reviewing the implementation and follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Dakar Regional Platform, the Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning of ECA underlined the need to give a higher profile to issues of advancement of women in the work of the Commission. Similarly, the General Assembly, in its resolutions 51/69 and 52/100, and the Economic and Social Council, in particular in its agreed conclusions 1997/2, called, *inter alia*, on the organizations of the United Nations system to promote mainstreaming of the gender perspective at all levels, including in the design, monitoring and evaluation of their policies and programmes in order to ensure effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

5. The creation of the second subprogramme derives from the decision of the same Conference of Ministers to strengthen the multinational programming and operational centres so as to enable them to play their role more efficiently as centres of excellence for the exchange of experience and information of regional economic integration.

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6. The Ministerial Follow-up Committee of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning of ECA reviewed the revisions proposed under this programme at its first meeting, on 24 April 1998.

A. Programme

Paragraph 14.3 In the first sentence, *replace* the word "five" with the word "seven", and at the end of the sentence *add* "(f) promoting the advancement of women; and (g) supporting subregional activities for development."

In the second sentence, *replace* the word "five" with the word "seven".

Replace the last sentence with the following: "These are gender mainstreaming and capacity-building".

B. Subprogrammes

Subprogramme 14.1 Facilitating economic and social policy analysis

Paragraph 14.7 *Delete* subparagraph 14.7 (b).

Subprogramme 14.5 Promoting regional cooperation and integration

Paragraph 14.30 *Add* the following after paragraph 14.30:

"*Subprogramme 14.6 Promoting the advancement of women*

"14.31 The overall goal of the subprogramme, for which the African Centre for Women is responsible, is to improve the economic, social and legal condition of women. More specific objectives include:

"(a) Enhancing the leadership role of women in decision-making in both the public and private sectors, in rural and urban communities;

"(b) Promoting the economic and social empowerment of women as well as their legal and human rights;

"(c) Enhancing access of women to education, including science and technology, and to health care, including reproductive, maternal and child health care;

"(d) Promoting employment and income-generating opportunities for women.

"14.32 These objectives will be attained through awareness-raising, research, technical assistance, including facilitating networking and dialogue between policy makers, community, business and women leaders and associations. Emphasis will be placed on the promotion of policies and strategies as well as the development and implementation, in collaboration with relevant national, regional and international institutions, of projects in research and training for the advancement of women. The activities also include monitoring the implementation of regional and global plans of action, more particularly the Beijing Declaration and the Platform

for Action and the African Common Position for the Advancement of Women.

"14.33 By the end of the medium-term plan period it is expected that the activities carried out under the subprogramme will have resulted in strengthening national mechanisms for the implementation of the regional and global platforms of action; increased the number of member States that will have reviewed and enhanced their laws protecting women's legal and human rights as well as appointed women into senior policy positions in the public sector; inspired the establishment or strengthening of women's organizations and associations dedicated to eliminating cultural and social barriers to the advancement of women; and increased the network of the African Federation of Women Entrepreneurs, established on the initiative of ECA, as a vehicle for the economic empowerment of women in Africa.

"*Subprogramme 14.7 Supporting subregional activities for development*

"14.34 The Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development Planning, at its most recent session, renamed the multinational programming and operational centres 'subregional development centres' and decided that ECA should re-orient the subregional development centres as centres of excellence with a view to strengthening and focusing their work on development priorities specific to each subregion. The Centres are, therefore, to function as a forum for exchange of experience and information and provision of support for the implementation of regional economic integration and to enhance the Commission's presence at the subregional and country levels.

"14.35 Commission resolution 810 (XXXI) gave ECA the mandate not only to ensure that the centres play their role more efficiently but also to enable them to focus more on specific subregional priorities. In line with that mandate, the centres will undertake to implement in their respective subregions aspects of the subprogramme tailored specifically to the priorities and circumstances of individual subregions. This will result in greater recognition of the role and responsibility of each subregional development centres in the implementation of the ECA programme of work and in making each centre directly accountable for resources allocated to it and the results to be achieved.

"14.36 The goals of the subprogramme, for which the subregional development centres will be individually responsible, are:

"(a) To strengthen the operational outreach of ECA at the country and subregional levels; to increase the leverage of the Commission's resources; and to ensure harmony between subregional and regional programme operations and those defined by the strategic directions of the Commission;

"(b) To develop programmes of activities that respond creatively to the needs of member States, non-governmental and private sector organizations in the subregion;

"(c) To promote gender mainstreaming in all relevant activities;

"(d) To enhance the dissemination and outreach of the Commission's policy recommendations, information and technical publications.

"14.37 These goals will be achieved through close cooperation between this subprogramme and other subprogrammes, in particular subprogramme 14.5, Promoting regional cooperation and integration, so as to take full advantage of the synergy between the various subprogrammes and the complementarities in the activities carried out by the Commission as a whole. Activities will include the provision of advisory services to member States, regional economic communities and subregional development operators; organizing public forums; and improved networking and communications. Efforts will be made to strengthen collaboration between subregional intergovernmental organizations of subregional development centres, bilateral organizations and United Nations system agencies operating within the respective subregions.

"14.38 By the end of the plan period, it is expected that the activities under this subprogramme will have contributed to the strengthening of the capacities of regional economic communities; expanding the network of the development communities that use the Commission's services; and increasing the scope and forums for policy dialogue and the sharing of experience on development issues at the subregional level."

C. Legislative mandates

Subprogramme 14.6 Promoting the advancement of women

Add reference to the following resolutions:

General Assembly resolutions

50/203 and 52/100	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
52/195	Women in development

Economic and Social Council resolutions

1997/17	Agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action

Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions

1997/2	Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Commission resolutions

824 (XXI)	Follow-up to the Dakar and Beijing Conferences: implementation of the global regional platforms for action for the advancement of women
792 (XXIX)	An integrated approach to women's empowerment: the Kampala Action Plan on Women and Peace; violation of women's human rights; and women's economic empowerment
802 (XXX)	African Platform for Action: African Common Position on the Advancement of Women

Subprogramme 14.7 Supporting subregional activities for development

Add reference to the following resolutions:

General Assembly resolution

52/205	Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries

Commission resolutions

810 (XXXI)	Strengthening of the multinational programming and operational centres
828 (XXXII)	The multinational programming and operational centres: strengthening the economic commission for Africa's subregional presence